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Classification  
Department of State  
**TELEGRAM**

American Embassy KINSHASA

INDICATE:  
☐ COLLECT  
☐ CHARGE TO

DEF 19-8

DISTRIBUTION  
E.O. 11652:  
TAGS;  
SUBJECT:

ACTION:  
ODS  
MASS, CG, US  
M-16's for Zaire

CONTROL: 1948  
DATE : 3-4-74

ACTION: Secstate WASHDC PRIORITY

~~SECRET~~ KINSHASA 1948

EYES ONLY ASST. SECRETARY EASUM FROM AMBASSADOR

FILES  
AMB 2  
DCM  
DAO  
ZAMISH  
POL 2

1. Prior to my departure Washington Feb. 15, I discussed status of Mobutu's request to purchase 1,000 M-16 rifles. I understood prospects were good GOZ request would be approved. From all information available to us here, unless US agrees to this sale, GOZ will acquire AK-47s from Chinese. Both from our point of view and Portugal's it would seem infinitely preferable to have US furnish limited number of M-16s (with end user safeguards) than to have GOZ turn to Chinese with all that this implies.
2. Mobutu now scheduled return Zaire March 6 and I hope to see him very soon thereafter. It would assist greatly in allaying anticipated complaints re our inability/refusal to sell Zaire other sophisticated military equipment if I could inform Mobutu at that time that USG has approved sale of M-16s. I strongly recommend such action.
3. Please advise.

VANCE

DRAFTED BY:

DCM:MHNewlin:lst:lcl

DRAFTING DATE

3/4/74

TEL. EXT.

100

APPROVED BY:

The Ambassador

CLEARANCES:

DAO:COL NEILOND *PN*

ZAMISH:COL.MALLET *MM*

DECLASSIFIED  
PA/HO Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
May 4, 2006

FORM 88-1

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Authority *UNDP* 009031  
By *Wp* NARA Date 6/3/03